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**Press Release**

With reference to the recent media stories regarding the dismissal of Mr. Ibrahim Eissa as editor of the *Al-Dostour* newspaper, and the alleged role of the Government in this decision as reported by the media, the Government of Egypt categorically denies any involvement in this decision. Those who have made this accusation, including Mr. Eissa, have done so without any evidence whatsoever.

*Al-Dostour*, an independent paper, was recently acquired by Mr. Sayed Badawi, the head of the Wafd Party, one of Egypt's main opposition parties which has been a repeated critic of the government over the years. For five years, Mr. Eissa has frequently published articles critical of the government and he is free to continue his career as an Egyptian journalist. His dismissal was carried out by the newspaper's board of directors and is an internal affair of the *Al-Dostour* newspaper.

The Government remains committed to expanding media freedoms in Egypt. Egypt has the largest and most vibrant independent media in the Arab world, with over 500 independent journals, magazines, and newspapers and more than five independent TV news broadcast channels, broadcasting numerous talk shows which openly discuss the politics of the day. Five new independent newspapers—two of which are run by opposition parties—received licenses in 2009.

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